



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield
(202) 224-6770

Tuesday, May 20, 2008

***ENZI: “WARN ACT” EXPANSION WOULD DO LITTLE TO HELP
DISPLACED WORKERS
URGES CONGRESS TO ENHANCE WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS TO
PREPARE WORKERS FOR HIGH DEMAND, HIGH WAGE JOBS***

Washington D.C. – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi, R-WY, Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP Committee), today said that Congress could better serve workers who lose their jobs through plant closures by reauthorizing critical workforce training programs, rather than by mandating an expanded notice of a closing.

“Simply giving workers a few extra weeks notice that they are going to lose their jobs would do very little, if anything, to help prepare them for their next careers,” Enzi said. “We need to stop tinkering around the edges and really get to work to help America’s workers get the knowledge and skills they need to prepare them for the high skill, high demand, and high wage jobs of the 21st Century.”

In prepared remarks for today’s HELP Committee hearing, “Plant Closings, Workers’ Rights and the WARN Act’s 20th Anniversary,” Enzi said that the Democrats’ proposal to expand the notification provisions of the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act would do little to help workers prepare for new employment, as it would not provide any funding or provisions for any actual worker training or re-training programs.

“Job training is important both to provide a skilled workforce to avoid plant closings, and to assist workers who lose their jobs,” Enzi said. “The Democrat proposal to expand the WARN Act would do nothing to enhance these goals of workforce training.”

Enzi urged Senate leadership to take up reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), to provide America’s workforce with a lifetime of job training and re-training opportunities.

“By some estimates, nearly 4 out of every 5 new jobs being created will require some education or training beyond high school,” Enzi said. “Congress must renew and improve the Workforce Investment Act to ensure that Americans have the knowledge and

skills to fill those jobs and succeed in the workplace. It is past time for the Senate to get serious about workforce development and take action on this important legislation.”

####